REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejection of the subject matter of this application is requested.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-7 are presented for consideration. Claim 1 has been amended to emphasize a main feature of the invention, i.e. that the coating of the invention is an optical fiber cable coating, not an optical fiber coating. Claim 1 is amended to specify an optical fiber ribbon cable. New claims 5-7 have been added to cover bundled optical fiber cables. Together, these claims are intended to encompass all optical fiber cable configurations. Support for this subject matter is found on page 6, et al. While the claims as originally filed were directed to optical fiber cables, these amendments are made to make abundantly clear that the claimed coatings are optical fiber cable coatings. Reasons for that will be found below.

The Drawing

The drawing appears to be acceptable as filed.

The Specification

The specification has been amended to provide a brief description of Fig. 4.

Claim Rejections

The rejections that are of record and intended to be responded to in this paper are:

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 102(b) as anticipated by Fukuda et al.

Argument

Prior to addressing the rejection a brief summary of the invention may be helpful. The invention is directed to optical fiber cables that are specifically designed for air blown installations. The elastic properties of the polymer materials that form the cable jacket have been found to strongly influence the ease and effectiveness of installing fibers using air blown techniques. Please refer to the performance data of Fig. 4, and the associated description in the specification.

It should be emphasized here that optical fiber cables typically consist of two or more optical fibers. Each of the optical fibers is coated with an optical fiber coating. This is described at length in applicants' specification. The usual optical fiber coating is a dual coating of polymer materials. After the optical fibers are coated with optical fiber coatings, groups of optical fibers, typically ribbons or bundles, are assembled and the groups of optical fibers are coated with a cable coating. There are essentially two separate coating technologies that have evolved for optical fiber cable. The optical fiber coating technology usually focuses on reducing microbending losses and other optical transmission properties of the glass fibers. The material being coated in this case is glass. The cable coating technology is usually focused on the external environment, and on properties of the optical fiber

cable related to installation. This is especially the case with optical fiber cables in air blown installations. It is well known that the surface characteristics of the optical fiber cable strongly influence the effectiveness of the air blown installation. It was not well known, prior to applicants' invention, that internal properties of the cable jacket materials can also strongly influence the effectiveness of the air blown installation.

All claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as fully met by Fukuda et al. Fukuda et al. describe primary optical fibers coatings, the coatings that are discussed above and which are applied directly to a glass fiber. These coatings, and the optical fiber coating technology in general, are different from the optical fiber cabling material technology. This distinction is treated above.

Applicants' claims, as amended, are drawn specifically to cable coatings. The material considerations for these are completely different from those described in the Fukuda et al. patent. The combination of cable coatings claimed by applicants are based on elasticity considerations. Fukuda et al. do not mention elastic properties.

It would not be obvious to substitute the specific polymer materials claimed, and designed specifically for glass fiber coatings, for polymer materials used for cable applications. The allegation that they have similar properties is only a coincidence. The properties are clearly designed to meet different needs and goals.

Since claims 1-7, as now pending, clearly distinguish from Fukuda et al., and since the distinctions are not obvious from anything stated in, or inferred from, the Fukuda et al. patent, these claims would appear to be allowable.

In the event that the Examiner concludes that a telephone call would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited and

encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at Area Code 757-258-9018.

Respectfully,

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